

in unstable housing situations, paying the majority of their incomes towards rent and who remain at risk of becoming homeless.

Nationally it puts at risk the approximately 4.5 million low income families who depend on HUD programs for their housing needs, more than half of which include seniors and persons with disabilities.

The FY13 THUD bill underfunds Housing Choice vouchers by as much as \$440 million, which translates into 55,000 vouchers for low income families in FY13. That's 55,000 families with an average annual income of \$12,568 that will lose access to affordable housing.

Project-Based Rental Assistance is also underfunded and the legislation would only extend year-long contracts to certain property owners, leaving investors, owners and tenants uncertain about the future of the program. The consequence of this uncertainty could be fewer owners renewing their contracts and a reduction in the number of Section 8 units available to low-income families.

The bill continues to woefully underfund public housing. Capital funding for public housing has been shortchanged for the past decade, and without an increase, 1.1 million low income households will continue to be exposed to deteriorating living conditions and potential safety hazards.

This legislation also weakens federal efforts to assist those already homeless by underfunding Homeless Assistance Grants by more than \$200 million. This means fewer permanent housing units, which have been shown to prevent homelessness and are less costly than the alternative of providing emergency shelter and services. For example, the Economic Roundtable found that individuals who are homeless in Los Angeles utilize an average of \$34,000 a year in county services (not including costs to the city, state or federal government) and that once permanently housed that number drops to \$14,000 (including housing capital, federal rental assistance and services).

Now is the time to protect low income families by prioritizing funding for affordable housing during these tough economic times. Unfortunately this bill falls short in that regard and puts far too many families in jeopardy of finding themselves without a safe and affordable home to call their own.

I regret that in good conscience I cannot support this bill.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BILL HUIZENGA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 12, 2012

Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 412, I was absent due to personal reasons.

Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

IN RECOGNITION OF MR. HOWARD R. MAIER

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 12, 2012

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Mr. Howard R. Maier, who is retiring after

23 years as Executive Director of the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency, better known as NOACA. He is being honored on July 12, 2012, on his retirement at the City Club of Cleveland.

As the region's Metropolitan Planning Organization, or MPO, NOACA serves Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain, and Medina Counties in Northeast Ohio, including all of Ohio's 10th Congressional District. NOACA prepares the region's Long Range Transportation Plan and the Transportation Improvement Program. NOACA also conducts water quality and air quality planning.

Mr. Maier has overseen an annual budget of \$6.5 million, a staff of 42, and a governing board of 44 elected and appointed officials. Under Howard's leadership, NOACA has received awards from the National Association of Regional Councils, the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations, the Ohio Department of Transportation, and Eco-City Cleveland, among others.

Howard Maier is a Fellow of the American Institute of Certified Planners. After receiving his Bachelor of Arts in Economics and his Masters in City Planning from Ohio State University, Howard earned his Master of Science in Public Management from Case Western Reserve University in 1974.

He was Director of Planning and Development for the City of Cleveland Heights and the Principal Planner for the Cuyahoga County Planning Commission before joining NOACA. He was asked by the NOACA board to step up as Acting Executive Director in 1989 when there was a leadership crisis at the agency. He was then appointed as Executive Director in 1991, where he served until his recent retirement in June 2012.

Howard Maier has distinguished himself with many awards and honors during his years with NOACA, including Honorary Membership in the American Institute of Architects, Mayfield High School Hall of Fame, Ally of the Year for the Northeast Ohio Alliance for Hope, Distinguished Alumnus of Ohio State University's College of Engineering, and NOACA's "Wally," the Walter F. Ehrnfelt Award for Outstanding Regional Contribution.

Mr. Speaker, and distinguished colleagues, please join me in honoring Howard Maier as he enjoys his well-earned retirement.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 12, 2012

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 453 on H.R. 4367, I am not recorded because I was absent due to a weather delay.

Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

REPEAL OF OBAMACARE ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. JEFF FLAKE

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 11, 2012

Mr. FLAKE. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of repealing the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

It's no secret that the U.S. health care system is broken; however, instead of strengthening the system, the Affordable Care Act took a top-down approach that will leave patients and taxpayers worse off than they were before.

I believe Americans should have access to effective and affordable care. This can best be accomplished by using market forces to improve quality and control cost.

I support allowing individuals to purchase health insurance across state lines and the expansion of associated health plans, health savings accounts, and other free-market reforms that allow individuals to be in control of their own healthcare decisions.

Americans have a choice when they buy a car or go to the grocery store. Why can't they have that same choice when purchasing something as important as health care?

I also support allowing small employers and individuals to pool together to purchase health insurance, thereby giving them greater buying power to negotiate when purchasing a plan.

Expanding health savings accounts not only gives individuals maximum flexibility in determining how to spend their health care dollars, but it encourages saving and helps reduce the overall cost of health care.

Finally, I support reforming the tax code so individuals get the same incentives that employers currently have for purchasing health care.

These measures will make health care more affordable, and unlike the law we are repealing today, they are sustainable.

I yield back the balance of my time.

RECOGNITION OF BRIGADIER GENERAL GWEN BINGHAM (U.S. ARMY)

HON. J. RANDY FORBES

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 12, 2012

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize a significant milestone being reached this year by Brigadier General Gwen Bingham. Brig. Gen. Bingham has been given the assignment to be the first woman ever to take command of the White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico. The White Sands Missile Range encompasses nearly 3,200 square miles and is the largest military installation in the United States, used by the Army, Navy, Air Force, NASA, and other government agencies and private enterprises for research, development and training.

Prior to this assignment, Brig. Gen. Bingham was also the first woman to hold the position of Quartermaster General and Commandant of the U.S. Army Quartermaster School at Fort Lee (Virginia). As Quartermaster General, she was responsible for overseeing the training of more than 20,000 military students annually.

This milestone marks yet another impressive achievement in an already distinguished 31-year career for Brigadier General Bingham. It is a testament to her professionalism, character, and selfless sacrifice to her country. I am honored to recognize her continued achievements.